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5. — *An Elementary Treatise on Sound; being the Second Volume of a Course of Natural Philosophy, designed for the Use of High Schools and Colleges.* Compiled by BENJAMIN PEIRCE, A. M., University Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy in Harvard University. Boston; James Munroe & Co. 1836. 8vo. pp. 220.

It is seldom that a book comes from the press, which is designed to meet a more urgent want of the community, than this second volume of a course of Natural Philosophy. At a time when so many books, good and bad, are written, on every variety of subjects, and with particular adaptation to the widely different classes of readers, — and especially when the overflowing supply of manuals used seems to leave nothing to be wanted in the work of instruction, — it is a little singular that there is occasion for the remark that this volume fills a gap which no one before appears to have noticed, or at any rate to have endeavoured to close. In elementary treatises prepared exclusively for the use of common schools, acoustics have been considered in a simple manner among the other branches of Natural Philosophy. But no work whatever has appeared, designed for the higher places of instruction, and presenting a full and accurate analysis of the principles of sound. We know it to be true of several of our colleges, — we believe it to be the case with all of them, — that while optics, electricity, magnetism, and astronomy have received their proper share of the student's time, this portion of science, with no reason for the exclusion, has been confined entirely to the lecture room. There is some occasion, then, for congratulation that we have a really new book, and one which cannot be laid aside; and since it is probably destined to be introduced into all our colleges, as it has already been into one, we are glad to know that it has been executed in such a manner as will leave little demand for another.

Professor Peirce lays no claim to originality in this work. He tells us that he made Sir John Herschell's *Treatise on Sound*, written for the *Encyclopedia Metropolitana*, the basis of his own book. In remodelling that work, he has consulted all the works on sound of any consequence, as well as embodied the very important discoveries recently made by Faraday; in a word, he has wrought a pleasing and symmetrical whole out of all the loose and scattered materials which relate to the subject. The labor of such a task is immense, and it is no small praise to say that it has been done accurately, and leaves nothing more to be desired. This department of science is yet in its infancy. Many of the

experiments have never been repeated. It would not be strange, therefore, if future research should show that some alterations were necessary in this treatise. But this does not affect the present character of the work. Such changes can easily be made as soon as they are required.

There is one subject connected with acoustics which is extremely difficult, and in which we think Professor Peirce has been remarkably successful; the organs of the human voice. There have been very contradictory theories in regard to the peculiar service of each part of this complex structure. In Mr. Peirce's book it is shown how they may be reconciled, and that the difficulty with every one of them does not lie in any false statement, but in a partial apprehension of the whole truth. He sees no reason why two independent parts of the organ of voice may not serve the same purpose, and strengthen one another; and if so, then there is nothing strange in the different experiments and theories, but only an insufficiency.

We close this brief notice with a single remark. An unusual degree of attention has been given of late years to music. We have almost come to admit it among the branches of popular education. In order that our colleges should keep at a suitable advance, means ought to be furnished for making an acquaintance with the principles of sound, and every well-educated man should consider it as a necessary accomplishment.

6. — *An Address to the Phi Beta Kappa Society of Rhode Island. Delivered September 7, 1836.* By WILLIAM G. GODDARD, Professor of Belles Lettres in Brown University. Boston. 1837. Svo. pp. 30.

THIS is a grave, polished, and scholarlike discourse. It is alike worthy of the occasion, and its accomplished author. The subject is the Value of Liberal Studies, with reference to the structure and tendencies of American society; and it is handled with ability and elegance. After a few introductory remarks on the prevailing tastes of the age and country, Mr. Goddard proceeds to a more particular examination of the causes which have impressed upon the American mind and manner their most decided characteristics. His observations on the influence of wealth and the general desire to attain its advantages, are sound and seasonable. In a fine passage, the author then pictures an "exile from intellectual Germany" landing upon our shores, and visiting the different parts of our wide-spread country. This gives him an opportunity of sketching the leading characteristics of the great divisions of the West, the South, and the North;